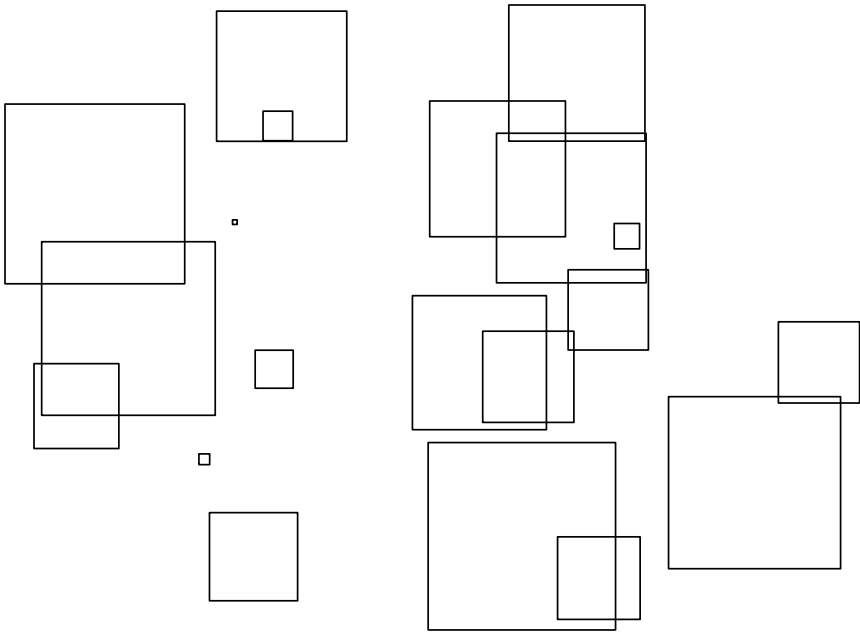


# drunk on clover & dreaming of earth

andrew penland



xPress(ed)

*Drunk on Clover & Dreaming of Earth* by Andrew Penland

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## AMNESIA

remember when  
the printing press  
exploded? they found  
a person among the wreckage--  
paper and ink  
as his bones and flesh.

he moved outside  
Inertia's  
city limits, contentedly  
making spools of colors  
unravel in  
stochastic starbursts  
of prayers.

then I remember  
the day  
Karma came  
and colors  
began to unravel him,  
left him bleeding  
stardust  
into turquoise amnesias  
he screamed out in pain  
clutching for a soul  
and then he woke up  
and he was  
you.

## FASHION SHOW

I  
went into the future or back into the past  
--can't remember which--  
to a fashion show:  
Explosions  
falling up from the sky,  
floating  
on rivers  
of blue-green blood,  
a helicopter landed; (it was part of the show)  
wearing a wide brim hat so big and floppy  
it  
made the sun strobe shadows in our eyes.

In the road, I saw them building  
a transistor radio the size of a truck;  
on the table, record players the size of an  
egg;  
I ate one.

A black woman appeared with HUGE  
dark eyes, like round onyx rocks set  
deep in the forehead;  
she was wearing rainbow rags, and she danced  
(danced!)  
making moon music, unafraid of the eclipse.  
(I wonder if rain is unafraid to fall.)  
Stepping into a closet,  
I saw beautiful things,  
seen sadly by children, as monsters.  
The children who scream to their paranoiac  
capitalist parents  
and never get enough to eat.

The closet monsters:  
a bright orange flamingo,  
a violet bat, a zoot suit prisoner,  
waves crashing like pots & pans.

I  
spun and spun, spiralwise,  
'til I was at the beginning,  
'til I was swallowed by a gramophone,  
'til I unsung the blues and my antennae grew,  
30 feet long! sprouted faces of their own!  
and flew away.  
I bounced off red Mars,  
said goodbye to my friends,  
left the fashion show exploding

and landed in a sea  
of big blue plastic balls.

I had done something most people never  
do;  
I had escaped the fashion show

alive.

## ENLIGHTENMENT

ones and zeros conspire  
to comprise

a buddhist  
monk

with a body of straw  
asleep in a womb

full of gasoline,  
calmly

meditating  
on a matchstick's  
flicker.

## LOST

a syringe with butterfly wings  
explores the skinthetic confusional booth  
(--are you lost, little boy/girl? it asks itself.)  
watch the ersatz cobwebs listen  
to clocks decaying tick by tock, aftershocks of  
instant spiders (just-add-matter) traversing  
octaves of whispering jewels,  
conversing with imaginary infidel numbers, coaxing them  
to attempt escape  
drifting away in stolen clouds  
of lesbian firecrackers' laughterdust,  
looped through the punctures in the doors of a  
somnambulent piano's scattered  
bones.



## IN CYBERSPACE

In cyberspace, there lived two thieves.  
They walked tightropes of hopes  
and belief. One stole light.  
The Other stole shadows. They fed  
on whatever dreams they could find.  
(To be honest, neither really existed. They were simply  
thoughts in each other's minds.)

To them the world is a fragile place;  
the moon in their eyes unendingly strobes  
with an aura of seashells and snowmen  
from June. A carnival lives in  
every room, but in every closet God's  
policemen hide. It rains stained glass  
and breaking light. They usurp  
those tiny pieces of magic  
from children's eyes on a summer night.

I would never  
say that what they do is right. But  
if they may walk through  
your dreams tonight, mouths full of opium  
and ocean foam. Ink and light for  
skin and bone, aching to wake up and  
be made real. Imagine how it felt  
before you were born. Then  
you will understand why they steal.

## REVOLUTION

counting leftover bones  
in the closet  
under clouds of radio  
static,  
drinking tea  
in a glass-skinned  
mosque  
with the anarchist king  
of formaldehyde city;  
playing hide-  
and-seek with masks  
who stole their tongues  
from decaying hymns.  
let them laugh like TV  
sitcoms  
while giraffes made of  
bulletproof paper  
trip on tightropes  
of trebleclef scream  
for our sins.

## YOU CAN'T EAT ROSES

the daggers  
wake up  
and pretend  
to be lilacs;  
clouds of marijuana  
smoke  
play dress-up  
with hats  
made of rain. they  
look around and are afraid  
to find  
the sunset  
has opened himself  
like an eye; his heart  
spills out and burns  
like vodka.

some days the comprehension  
of everything  
eludes me.  
in those moments,  
depression can speak like  
salvation; a woman can  
feel like a last resort.  
when clowns go jumping  
off of tenth story windows,  
and children reek their  
bleeding gums on the world.  
some of us have to learn  
the hard way  
you can't eat roses  
made of tinfoil and barbed  
wire  
(no matter how  
good  
they taste. )

## DE.COM/POSITION

the automaton's intestines  
revolt green  
silk flowers screaming  
from the throat  
spilling over, pools of  
newspaper's erasure. (butterflies,  
swallowed at 45 rpm

being vomited at 33 1/3) out onto  
a spiderwebyarn bridge, where pigfaced  
police dance with prostitutes  
: more words, meaningless,  
on the sidewalk...

an aluminum skeleton:  
hostage of a cathode ray  
jungle, harvesting the visceral  
visions revisited--violent violet  
violins

happening like a woman's thighs.

## MR. Q?

Mr. Q? (is the truth)  
(with flowers zanging from his midnight-skin  
sprouting boots)  
in a red blue red yellow purple pink loop suit  
-a gift from space-time-word travelers  
through the airwaves-  
he, playing a guitar to paint the songs,  
blow harmonica spattered dots, and spidering notes  
sprayed  
in vertical columns (stuck  
in) the fraggle-hair sky holding  
reckless angles  
13ing across metacanvases of meaning  
winking thought-eyes at our soul-deep  
singer-soul of Mr. Q?  
is taking a ride in his balloon  
to suburban new moon  
city  
in the skyscrapers and spiderwebs  
he collects green powders  
and shadow shout-outs (the balloon touches down)  
and Mr. Q?  
clown-faced smile stretching cheeks;  
a ladybug electrode sucking on his face,  
  
implanted on his eyeball edges  
( cybernetic teardrop).  
his only addiction (every artist has one)  
data in his tearduct  
informainlining.

The walking carnival footstep rhythm  
boot taps  
on unfound streets  
the leaving legacy-journey of Mr. Q?

## MISTER SKULL

mister  
skull  
drinking amnesia  
from  
a  
brownbag:

(he is)  
lost  
drunk as fuck  
leaving January  
walking back  
to Christmas

in a brokenglass  
rain,  
searching for the Jesus  
he  
used to  
be.

## IRREAL

we were drifting in an irreal ship  
through unnamed space and liquid sleep  
fishing for stars (using faith as bait),  
when we saw a fugitive angel's face  
watching us sail our fragile craft.  
she smiled (pinkly) and then she laughed,  
as she began to erase

herself.

## QUESTIONS

do traffic lights  
envy the voices of  
rainbows? do pianos  
blush when lovingly  
touched? are empty houses  
haunted by lonely dreams?  
does a cat worry if this life is his 9th?  
do newspapers know when  
their time is past? do dandelions  
worry about coming apart? do raindrops  
ever have a fear of falling? do the memories  
of elephants outlast their bones? does yesterday  
know what will happen tomorrow? which is more  
holy: a church or a playground? does Jesus paint  
an infant's dreams? why is the moon so temperamental?  
where do screams go when they're gone? does Hell have  
chains that could hold Houdini? have you and I met somewhere  
before? how many seconds have at most been between us?  
have you ever walked through my thoughts, anonymous?  
when a clown needs to laugh, who does he call? does God ever wake  
up, utterly alone, and decide to steal a baby to call his very own?



## MONA LISA WAS A MAD SCIENTIST

she drank the diagram  
& went to work  
sculpting with a chisel  
& chunks of sleep,  
which flicker & blossomed  
kaleidoscopelike. she made bodies:  
half naked, half true. (none human.)  
they began to decay,  
from bodies to selves,  
and as dreams overwhelmed her,  
they kidnapped her mind

carried her into an impossible room  
a perfect sphere: no doors,  
no windows,  
just mouths all along  
the sloping walls, faeries  
in the air, banana peels made of chrome  
on the floor.  
it was a fragile home sweet home,  
held together with saliva and splicing tape.  
she woke up hungover, and hungry  
for color, and stayed there until  
she could sing

an escape.

## BEAUTIFUL

by the intoxicated theatre's illusion  
there's always the old astrognostic  
apothecary  
selling the beautiful new diseases,  
fresh from places  
no one's ever been--

they fill your skull  
with prismatic pools  
of deliciousnumb fiberoptic  
ants (buzzing)  
that learn  
and chew  
and dissolve  
your name.

you'll need a cure  
(but the cure is illegal)  
and soon stainless steel  
mentally ill calla lilies  
crawl through your  
eyelids  
exploding like  
spaceships forced to learn earth's gravity  
without enough  
time  
to learn  
how to land.

## LET ME TELL YOU

a lie:  
the ink regrets  
leaving the pen  
like a clown  
crucified for the freaks'  
amusement,  
on a night when the moon  
watches the carnival  
and laughs because  
she thinks  
this time it might last

(but by the time  
the frog prince is kissed  
you'll probably have  
forgotten that you ever  
read this  
but I had to say it because  
sometimes

light is a scream  
in a blackhole's mouth  
escaping just because:  
it can't.)

## FUGITIVES

between an unsacred moon  
and an uncertain tomorrow,  
the android police capture  
the guitarplayer,  
cut off his hands,  
and throw him off the road.

earlier that day,  
an innocent man  
had stood before a jury  
of reanimated  
corpses.  
the judge goes through  
hateful  
morphine withdrawal;  
in his eyes  
everyone on earth  
today  
is guilty.

but in this moment  
we have utmost hope  
like children  
running away from home.  
the difference is  
the distance  
between us  
and home,  
whether measured  
in kisses  
or miles  
or lies.

tonight,  
the judge sleeps  
fitfully,  
regrets in his pillow,  
faeries stripping  
in his dreams

and the vacated baseball fields  
are haunted  
by the ghosts of little boys  
who want one more game

and lovers make love  
in confessional booths  
so that atonement is instantaneous.

night and day might  
cancel each other out.

the android police are  
patrolling other sectors  
godknowswhere else  
looking for fugitives  
of space and time;  
somewhere as the angels  
paint the sunrise  
you can almost hear  
the guitarplayer  
learning how to sing

his prayers.

## ESCAPE

a clown sm  
iles.sc  
attered electrons,  
a jar of moonshine  
(with a skull inside.)  
a mouth taped shut;  
a CD. (erased)

spiders. keys (rusted &  
use  
less)

a fi  
refly. bulle  
ts. red lollipops.

h2o

on the body of  
a da  
isy ( for no reason)  
in the                      mouth

of a sp  
aceship crashed  
in an elephant graveyard  
disintegrating  
instantly (&may  
be the vo  
ice

inside

e  
scapes.)

## GRAFFITI

new theories of molecular deconstruction  
scattered through the streets walls rooms inner ears  
nonverbal rumors eaten & shat  
mixed into cupcakes and eaten again  
by exoskeletoned bodies who evolve from  
being papier-mache to flesh to steel  
to audiotape to spiderwebs  
in conveniently anthropomorphic guise,  
walking a moebius strip tightrope past the cops  
& bankers so tight, still trying to glue  
their reasons to the sunshine and decapitate  
all the dandelions (spreading their message  
of rejuvenation; writing the graffiti of themselves  
on decay.)

## SPIDER

spider (nonexistent) starving  
translucent intangible shatterproof an orifice-body  
as turquoise as air, emigrating through  
an electromagnetic bible's peephole,  
shooting spirals: audible silence  
and silent moan, leaking misinformation  
and cum; this spider has an important  
job.

she spins the space  
between our words,  
staying as calm as  
an unearthed diamond

while all around her,  
the symbols crash.



## LANGUAGE

colors found in dark houses of childhood  
spill all over the  
psychic queen,  
dancing from one tomorrow  
to the next,  
(step lightly  
because they don't yet  
exist),  
down vulnerable eyes'  
onyx doorways, leading to mouths  
of infinite scream.

excited moons talk to a mystic  
with  
iron teeth and futuristic  
pseudosoul wrapped in typewriter ribbon.  
together they laugh at the lawyers of physics  
like resident dreams on a sleepless day  
marrying the ersatz heaven of amnesia;  
selfhood painting itself free.

## HALLUCID

linguist  
starlequins on uppers  
and tightropes of oxygen  
disciples of no one  
open doors  
of spaceships(reasonless,  
bulletproof paper) smuggling  
nutmeg  
kool-aid  
and sugar  
into the abcaliph's cerebellum  
and

he wakes up  
with his finger on the trigger  
of a hallucid  
language

he'll never  
understand,

just one twitch away  
from enlightenment.

## DOPE

the defrocked dope dealer's glittery eyes match his iridescent fishnet stockings  
(which belie his stolen businessman's suit). he is telling the faeries' beautiful  
tales. (they know better but believe anyway.) he is writing physics equations in  
the air. for the cops to breathe (like sabotage.)

meanwhile fifths  
and thirds of (drive-in  
theatre)  
starlight  
rain on the foamrubber  
elephants' graveyard;  
snails continue tedious hejiras  
towards saturn, crawling through  
the sky  
inch by inch. passing

Beauties and feelings	old dead priests
a seraph-man	skeletons hands
scarlet demons	clouds waters
like a troupe of silver dancers	winds

against a dust of emerald  
poured in your ears.

But let's concern ourselves with earth for a minute.

The defrocked dope dealer's booby trap worked: FLOWRs made of  
entropy and antimatter eating through the cops' insomnia 'til sunrise.  
They have accidentally overdosed on unreasonable beliefs.  
Crayola-colored crows flash in the distance. They know. They  
whisper in the blank space newspapers afford them. Earth hears them.

But only the faeries believe them.

## THE STAGE OF SKY

already this morning  
the moon had forgotten

the tinfoil spaceships  
who kissed her eyes

and played in her tranquil  
oceans of doubt. she leaves

the stage of sky a coquette  
& every jewel

and octave of darkness breaks  
as st. peter escapes from heaven's

gates (the sunrise only screams  
to remind you): you are trapped

in this feedback loop  
of accident

al miracles & circumstant  
ial beauty, raindrops of divinity

in an angel's (/your) eyes.

## BUT THE USUAL

as the tulips  
exploded through  
the bones  
of a well-dressed well-to-do 9-to-5  
cadaver

the circus train derailed  
and crashed into a church.  
(the dandelions whisper  
that it happened on purpose)  
so God will be  
homeless for a night-  
just like every  
other.

but  
the usual  
inevitable  
microscopic  
angels  
hide elephant molecules  
to smuggle off earth  
and reassemble in  
new constellation's construction. they wink  
at the (somnambulent) getaway spaceships,  
(titanium fugitives  
dreaming they are shadow-stallions  
racing through infinity,  
who dream they are  
carousel horses  
at rest.)

## INVITATION

(please)  
share a nonverbal  
linguanaut's  
delirium  
for just a second more.

## ENCORE PERFORMANCE

You must pay your tribute to have the stage  
and set the severed heads around the scene. The lights  
must strike up and illuminate the questions: Whose  
heads? Who cares? It's all irony, history

(school)            the audience will approve no matter what  
                      they will sit in strained silence, the 2 or  
                      3 who come. The rest

are in the streets,  
buying beer, trading shoes, to

kicking over garbage cans and burning down  
their homes.

The theater is just a cardboard flat,  
spray painted green to symbolize uncertainty,  
the director anticipates with hardcore ambitions.

(and memories of dreamer's drama class, having his eyes cut out  
lightning poured through the sockets--mind painted with fingerprint paint/  
dead red green blue and the emptiness/ the rainbow books, being audienced  
by pots and cans. This is where he learned to <in>direct  
a few plays, with traffic,funerals])

he wonders

Who wants to swallow the meaning? Experimentally,  
people lined up for miles

(outside) finally pacified, idle, chattering contentedly,  
laughing about ashes and guillotines and [minds]  
everyone is waiting (for something)  
(all except the farmer, who has gone crazy, stayed  
in bed; planting daisies and quartz instead of corn.  
the bank is going to foreclose this year, he's losing  
the only thing he has. . . he hints

with an aged smile harvested from unexplained knowledge)

Escaped pigs arrived, though, and they mill about the market,  
blasphemers of Allah--their existence a lie.  
having broken down the fence that kept them from the who-men //or vice versa//  
emancipated/oinking swine epiphanies in mud;  
buyers come closer to knight them for wisdom,  
eating their own feces. How efficient.  
How now. How humane. How polite.

As they ponder the fear and fascination of bacon,  
Grandma makes some from memories and life.  
A stranger snoring on her couch,  
who she can't admit she doesn't love  
(the war was over very long ago,  
but)  
every day in her living the room the smell of  
flesh again and again and

finally,  
the director realized the size (and scope) of his audience,  
told the actors to leave.  
He discovered Bitter Weeping by the front row,  
a man just learning to cry for his life.  
Then the mob rushed in to see the show; the wrong  
starting time



had been printed on the tickets. He picked up  
his heads and ate his corn,  
and at midnight mass he was finally born

(the illegitimate son of 'foreigners' fleeing  
and speaking on a sunburned tongue.)

The audience filed in, the critics took his seat.  
'How do you expect to live?'  
their anxious  
eyes asked, in nervous need of something to be said...

He considered his family (the world)  
and smiled.

and then stepped back on stage.

